

REMARKS

Applicants have amended Claims 1, 7, 8, 11, and 16. Support for the amendments to the claims can be found, for example, in the Specification as originally filed at page 3, lines 19-24 and at page 5, line 28 through page 6, line 30. No new matter has been added.

Rejection of Claims 1, 3-4, 7-11, 13, and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has maintained the rejection of Claims 1, 3-4, 7-11, 13, and 16-19 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,842,549 issued to Johnson (hereinafter, “Johnson”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,343,586 issued to Vosbikian (hereinafter, “Vosbikian”). The Examiner states that the backing plate in Johnson is defined by element 16 which is generally rectangular in shape and has a pair of retaining means 16 and 16a which are L-shaped in cross section. The Examiner also states that deformable sanding pad 20 has parallel grooves formed along its sides which cooperate with the retaining means to engage the lateral sides of the sanding pad to secure it in place. The Examiner states that while no projections extend from the ends of the L-shaped members, it is known in the wiping implement art, as taught by Vosbikian, to provide such projections to aid in securing a pad. The Examiner also states that Vosbikian is from analogous art because it is directed to securing a grooved pad within its support and teaches the expediency of providing projections on the support to bite into the pad and prevent slippage.

Applicants have amended Claims 1, 7, 8, 11, and 16. Johnson does not teach or suggest the invention of the amended claims. Johnson is directed to a sandpaper holder block wherein sandpaper is clamped over an anvil. Johnson illustrates anvils made of rubber or plastic and does not teach or suggest that the anvils contain abrasive grains. Thus, Johnson does not teach or suggest the sanding system of amended Claim 1 which includes, in part, a deformable sanding pad having rectangular dimensions similar to those of the backing plate and a thickness that is not greater than the shorter of the rectangular dimensions, having abrasive grains adhered to the pad thereby forming at least one sanding surface, and having a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove.

Also, as acknowledged by the Examiner, Johnson does not teach or suggest a plurality of projections adapted to pierce a side of a deformable sanding pad. Thus, Johnson also does not teach or suggest at least one retaining member in communication with a backing plate having a generally L-shaped cross section with a plurality of projections extending from an end of the

generally L-shaped cross section adapted at one end to pierce a side of a deformable sanding pad in the thickness direction through at least a portion of the groove, as described in element (c) of amended Claim 1.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's statement that Johnson's anvil **20** is a deformable sanding pad. Johnson does not teach that the anvils are deformable. Applicants also disagree with the Examiner's statement that the backing plate in Johnson is defined by element **16** which is generally rectangular in shape. Applicants submit that element **16** is not a backing plate, but instead is part of a clamp mechanism used to hold the protuberance of one of Johnson's anvils.

Johnson also does not teach or suggest a pad for a sanding system as described in amended Claim 11. Johnson does not teach or suggest a pad comprising rectangular dimensions similar to those of the backing plate; a thickness that is not greater than the shorter of the rectangular dimensions; abrasive grains adhered to the pad thereby forming at least one sanding surface; and a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove, as stated in amended Claim 11.

Vosbikian is directed to a window cleaning device and does not teach or suggest a sanding system as described in amended Claim 1 or a pad for a sanding system as described in amended Claim 11. Applicants maintain their belief that one of ordinary skill in the art would not look to a window cleaning device reference such as Vosbikian to produce a sanding system and that there is no suggestion in Johnson to apply the teachings of a window cleaning reference and that there is no suggestion in Vosbikian to apply the teachings of a sandpaper holder reference. Nevertheless, like Johnson, Vosbikian does not teach or suggest a deformable sanding pad as in element (b) of amended Claim 1 wherein the sanding pad has rectangular dimensions similar to those of the backing plate and a thickness that is not greater than the shorter of the rectangular dimensions, has abrasive grains adhered to the pad thereby forming at least one sanding surface, and has a pair of opposed parallel ends wherein at least one of the pair of parallel ends comprises a groove. Neither Johnson nor Vosbikian teach or suggest abrasive grains adhered to a pad as described in amended Claim 11.

Since Vosbikian does not remedy the deficiencies of Johnson, the claimed invention is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Johnson in view of Vosbikian.

Rejection of Claims 2 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has also maintained the rejections of Claims 2 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Vosbikian and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,524,175 issued to Beaudry *et al.* (hereinafter, “Beaudry”). The Examiner states that Beaudry was applied for the teaching of making the sanding pad of a resilient open-celled foam product.

As described above, neither Johnson nor Vosbikian, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the claimed invention as amended. Beaudry does not teach or suggest a sanding system as described in amended Claim 1, from which Claim 2 depends, or a pad for a sanding system as described in amended Claim 11, from which Claim 12 depends. In addition, Beaudry does not remedy the previously described deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian.

Since Beaudry does not remedy the deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian, the invention of Claims 2 and 12 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Johnson in view of Vosbikian further in view of Beaudry.

Rejection of Claims 5-6 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has maintained the rejections of Claims 5-6 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Vosbikian and further in view of French Patent Publication No. 2,620,367 by Pascallon (hereinafter, “Pascallon”). The Examiner states that Pascallon was applied for the teaching of making the various sanding surfaces of Johnson with different sanding characteristics for selective use of portions of the tool.

As described above, neither Johnson nor Vosbikian, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the claimed invention as amended. Pascallon does not teach or suggest a sanding system as described in amended Claim 1, from which Claim 5-6 depend, or a pad for a sanding system as described in amended Claim 11, from which Claims 14-15 depend. In addition, Pascallon does not remedy the previously described deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian.

Since Pascallon does not remedy the deficiencies of Johnson and Vosbikian, the invention of Claims 5-6 and 14-15 is patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Johnson in view of Vosbikian and further in view of Pascallon.

Information Disclosure Statement

A Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is being filed concurrently herewith. Entry of the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C.

By 
Colin C. Durham
Registration No. 52,843
Telephone: (978) 341-0036
Facsimile: (978) 341-0136

Concord, MA 01742-9133

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